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EXAMINER

GAY, JENNIFER HAWKINS

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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3672

DATE MAILED: 04/14/2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

# Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/994,199

Applicant(s)

KURKJIAN ET AL.

Examiner

Jennifer H Gay

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

## Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

## Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on \_\_\_\_.
- 2a) ☐ This action is FINAL. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

## Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-38 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-38 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

## Application Papers

- 9) ☒ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 26 November 2001 is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☒ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on \_\_\_\_ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
- If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

## Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- \* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
- a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

## Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). \_\_\_\_
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) 5,6,7. 6) ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_

## **DETAILED ACTION**

### ***Drawings***

1. Figures 1-8 should be designated by a legend such as --Prior Art-- because only that which is old is illustrated. See MPEP § 608.02(g). A proposed drawing correction or corrected drawings are required in reply to the Office action to avoid abandonment of the application. The objection to the drawings will not be held in abeyance.

### ***Specification***

2. The use of the trademark MONEL has been noted in this application. It should be capitalized wherever it appears and be accompanied by the generic terminology.

Although the use of trademarks is permissible in patent applications, the proprietary nature of the marks should be respected and every effort made to prevent their use in any manner which might adversely affect their validity as trademarks.

### ***Claim Objections***

3. Claims 7, 11, 17, 22, and 37 are objected to because of the following informalities: they contain the trademark MONEL. Trademarks should not be used as limitations because the scope covered by the trademark may change over time thus changing the scope and possible the meaning of the claim. Appropriate correction is required.

### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112***

4. The following is a quotation of the first paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall contain a written description of the invention, and of the manner and process of making and using it, in such full, clear, concise, and exact terms as to enable any person skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make and use the same and shall set forth the best mode contemplated by the inventor of carrying out his invention.

5. Claims 32-38 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, as containing subject matter which was not described in the specification in such a way as to enable one skilled in the

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art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make and/or use the invention. Neither the specification nor the drawings have provided a description or depiction of a "hydraulic mechanism" as recited in claim 32 or "hydraulic assembly" as recited in claim 35. The examiner is assuming for the purposes of examination that the hydraulic assembly referred to in the claims is some form of pump or circulation system to move fluid through the wellbore.

### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

6. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

7. Claims 1-4, 7, 10, 11, 15, 16, 18, 20-23, 35, 36, and 38 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Abercrombie (US 4,605,065) in view of Carrier et al.

*Regarding claim 1:* Abercrombie disclose a method for identifying the presence of a corrosive substance in wellbore fluid. The method involves the following steps (see col. 2, ll 20-40):

- Providing a tool that includes at least one sample of a material that is optically reactive to the corrosive substance.
- Exposing the at least one sample to the wellbore fluid.

Abercrombie discloses all of the limitations of the above claims except for the corrosive substance being hydrogen sulfide. In column 1, lines 10-40, Carrier et al. teaches that hydrogen sulfide is a common corrosive agent in wellbores. It would have been considered obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art, at the time the invention was made, to have used the method of Abercrombie to detect hydrogen sulfide, a common wellbore corrosive substance as taught Carrier et al., in order to have been able to detect the presence of poisonous and corrosive hydrogen sulfide through the use a relatively uncomplicated detection process.

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*Regarding claims 2 and 3:* The at least one sample is inspected for changes due to corrosion after it is removed from the wellbore. *It should be noted that the inspection of the at least one sample for changes due to corrosion would be indicate if hydrogen sulfide was in the well and the degree of the corrosion would indicate the amount of hydrogen sulfide.*

*Regarding claim 4:* As noted in column 2, lines 20-40, the tool is lowered into and retrieved from the wellbore.

*Regarding claim 7:* As noted in column 2, lines 22-25, the at least one sample is made of stainless steel.

*Regarding claim 10:* The method of Abercrombie further includes the following steps:

- Lowering the tool into the wellbore where the tool includes a housing (11), the at least one sample (59), and at least one passage (27) for conducting formation fluid to the at least one sample.
- Delivering the wellbore fluid to the at least one sample through the passage.
- Retrieving the tool from the wellbore.
- Inspecting the at least one sample to determine if the wellbore fluid contains the corrosive material.

Abercrombie discloses all of the limitations of the above claims except for the corrosive substance being hydrogen sulfide. In column 1, lines 10-40, Carrier et al. teaches that hydrogen sulfide is a common corrosive agent in wellbores. It would have been considered obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art, at the time the invention was made, to have used the method of Abercrombie to detect hydrogen sulfide, a common wellbore corrosive substance as taught Carrier et al., in order to have been able to detect the presence of poisonous and corrosive hydrogen sulfide through the use a relatively uncomplicated detection process.

*Regarding claim 11:* As noted in column 2, lines 22-25, the at least one sample is made of stainless steel.

*Regarding claim 15:* The method of Abercrombie further includes the following steps:

- Lowering the tool into the wellbore where the tool includes a housing (11), the at least one sample (59), and at least one passage (27) for conducting formation fluid to the at least one sample.

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- Delivering the wellbore fluid to the at least one sample through the passage.
- Retrieving the tool from the wellbore.
- Inspecting the at least one sample to determine if the wellbore fluid contains the corrosive material.

Abercrombie discloses all of the limitations of the above claims except for the corrosive substance being hydrogen sulfide. In column 1, lines 10-40, Carrier et al. teaches that hydrogen sulfide is a common corrosive agent in wellbores. It would have been considered obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art, at the time the invention was made, to have used the method of Abercrombie to detect hydrogen sulfide, a common wellbore corrosive substance as taught Carrier et al., in order to have been able to detect the presence of poisonous and corrosive hydrogen sulfide through the use a relatively uncomplicated detection process.

*Regarding claim 16:* As noted in column 2, lines 22-25, the at least one sample is made of stainless steel.

*Regarding claim 18:* While not specifically disclosed that the at least one sample changes color in response to the presence of hydrogen sulfide, the examiner notes that Abercrombie does inspect the at least one sample for changes due to corrosion and it is the examiner's opinion that color change is the most common visual way of determining if a material has corroded. Therefore, the examiner believes that Abercrombie teaches this feature.

*Regarding claim 20:* The apparatus used in the method of Abercrombie includes the following features:

- A housing (11).
- At least one sample (59).
- At least one passage (27) for conducting formation fluid to the at least one sample.

Abercrombie discloses all of the limitations of the above claims except for the corrosive substance being hydrogen sulfide. In column 1, lines 10-40, Carrier et al. teaches that hydrogen sulfide is a common corrosive agent in wellbores. It would have been considered obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art, at the time the invention was made, to have used the method of Abercrombie to detect hydrogen sulfide, a common wellbore corrosive substance as taught

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Carrier et al., in order to have been able to detect the presence of poisonous and corrosive hydrogen sulfide through the use a relatively uncomplicated detection process.

*Regarding claims 21 and 22:* As noted in column 2, lines 22-25, the at least one sample is made of stainless steel.

*Regarding claim 23:* While not specifically disclosed that the at least one sample changes color in response to the presence of hydrogen sulfide, the examiner notes that Abercrombie does inspect the at least one sample for changes due to corrosion and it is the examiner's opinion that color change is the most common visual way of determining if a material has corroded. Therefore, the examiner believes that Abercrombie teaches this feature.

*Regarding claim 35:* The apparatus used in the method of Abercrombie includes the following features:

- A housing (11).
- At least one sample (59).
- At least one passage (27) for conducting formation fluid to the at least one sample.
- A hydraulic assembly for delivering the fluid to the at least one sample. *It should be noted that a hydraulic assembly such as a pump would have to be used to circulate fluid within the well.*

Abercrombie discloses all of the limitations of the above claims except for the corrosive substance being hydrogen sulfide. In column 1, lines 10-40, Carrier et al. teaches that hydrogen sulfide is a common corrosive agent in wellbores. It would have been considered obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art, at the time the invention was made, to have used the method of Abercrombie to detect hydrogen sulfide, a common wellbore corrosive substance as taught Carrier et al., in order to have been able to detect the presence of poisonous and corrosive hydrogen sulfide through the use a relatively uncomplicated detection process.

*Regarding claim 36:* As noted in column 2, lines 22-25, the at least one sample is made of stainless steel.



*Regarding claim 38:* While not specifically disclosed that the at least one sample changes color in response to the presence of hydrogen sulfide, the examiner notes that Abercrombie does inspect the at least one sample for changes due to corrosion and it is the examiner's opinion that color change is the most common visual way of determining if a material has corroded. Therefore, the examiner believes that Abercrombie teaches this feature.

8. Claims 5, 6, 8, 9, 13, 24, 25, 30, and 31 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Abercrombie (US 4,605,065) in view of Carrier et al. as applied to claims 1, 10, and 20 above, and further in view of Waterman et al. (US 5,627,749).

*Regarding claims 5, 6, 13, and 24:* Abercrombie and Carrier et al. discloses all of the limitations of the above claims except for a temperature sensor to take temperature readings of the wellbore fluid. Waterman et al. teaches a method and tool for monitoring corrosion in a wellbore where the tool includes a temperature sensor. It would have been considered obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art, at the time the invention was made, to have included a temperature sensor as taught by Waterman et al. in the system of Abercrombie in view of Carrier et al. in order to have been able to correlate the amount of corrosion to the temperature of the well since corrosion is dependent on the temperature of the fluid (see col. 1, ll 23-27).

*Regarding claims 8, 9, 30, and 31:* Abercrombie and Carrier et al. discloses all of the limitations of the above claims except for a sensor that is capable of detecting the visual change in the at least one sample where the sensor can transmit a signal that indicates the change. Waterman et al. teaches a sensor that monitors the corrosion of a coupon and a CPU stores and transmits the data from the sensor. It would have been considered obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art, at the time the invention was made, to have included the sensor and CPU of Waterman et al. in the system of Abercrombie in view of Carrier et al. in order to have provided a means for monitoring the change in hydrogen sulfide amounts over a given time without having to remove the tool (see col. 1, ll 30-50).

*Regarding claim 25:* Abercrombie, Carrier et al., and Waterman et al. discloses all of the limitations of the above claims except for a pressure sensor. However, in column 1, lines 23-27, Waterman et al. teaches that the rate of corrosion is dependent on the pressure within the wellbore. Therefore, it would have been considered obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art, at the time



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the invention was made, to have include a pressure sensor in the system of Abercrombie in view of Carrier et al. and Waterman et al. in order to have been able to correlate the amount of corrosion to the pressure of the well since corrosion is dependent on the pressure of the well (see col. 1, ll 23-27).

9. Claim 14 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Abercrombie (US 4,605,065) in view of Carrier et al. as applied to claim 10 above, and further in view of GB 2344365.

Abercrombie and Carrier et al. discloses all of the limitations of the above claims except for collecting a sample of the wellbore fluid in the tool. GB 2344365 teaches a method and apparatus for measuring the amount of volatile components in wellbore fluid where a sample of the wellbore fluid is collected and brought to the surface (see page 8, line 25-page 9, line 5). It would have been considered obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art, at the time the invention was made, to have used the system of Abercrombie in view of Carrier et al. to collect a sample of the wellbore fluid as taught by GB 2344365 in order to have been able to perform a complete analysis of the wellbore fluid.

10. Claims 12 and 26-29 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Abercrombie (US 4,605,065) in view of Carrier et al. as applied to claims 10 and 20 above, and further in view of Williams (US 4,688,638).

*Regarding claims 12, 26, 27, and 29:* Abercrombie and Carrier et al. discloses all of the limitations of the above claims except for the at least one sample including several coupons where the coupons have different reactive responses. As noted in column 1, line 67-column 2, line 12, Williams teach a downhole corrosion coupon holder. The holder can hold two or more coupons and the coupons may be of different material. It would have been considered obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art, at the time the invention was made, to have include several coupons in the system of Abercrombie in view of Carrier et al. where the coupons have different reactive responses as taught by Williams in order to have been able to determine how different alloys were affected by the same environment.

*Regarding claim 28:* Abercrombie and Carrier et al. discloses all of the limitations of the above claims except for the tool housing being resistant to hydrogen sulfide. While it is not specifically taught that the coupon holder of Williams is resistant to corrosion due to hydrogen sulfide, the examiner considers the statement that, once the tool is brought to the surface, the coupons are removed from the holder and then tested (see col. 4, ll 35-40) an indication that the holder itself has not corroded due to the fact that it is the coupons that used to determine the rate of corrosion. Therefore, it would have been considered obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art, at the time the invention was made, to have formed the coupon holder of Abercrombie in view of Carrier et al. so that it was corrosion resistant as taught by Williams in order to have been able to reuse the coupon holder.

11. Claims 17 and 37 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Abercrombie (US 4,605,065) in view of Carrier et al. as applied to claims 15 and 35 above, and further in view of *Monel*.

Abercrombie et al. and Carrier et al. discloses all of the limitations of the above claims except for the coupons being made of MONEL alloy 400. On page 4, paragraph 10, *Monel* teaches that it is known that MONEL is corroded by hydrogen sulfide but resists embrittling in oil-well brines that contain hydrogen sulfide. It would have been considered obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art, at the time the invention was made, to have formed the coupon of Abercrombie in view of Carrier et al. from MONEL as taught by *Monel* in order to have used a metal that corrodes in hydrogen sulfide but would not become brittle in a wellbore.

12. Claim 19 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Abercrombie (US 4,605,065) in view of Carrier et al. and Waterman et al. (US 5,627,749).

Abercrombie discloses a method for monitoring fluid in a wellbore that includes the following steps:

- Lowering a tool into a wellbore where the tool includes a housing (11), at least one sample (59), and at least one passage (27) for conducting formation fluid to the at least one sample.
- Delivering wellbore fluid to the at least one sample through the passage.

- Retrieving the tool from the wellbore.
- Inspecting the at least one sample to determine if the wellbore fluid contains the corrosive material.

Abercrombie discloses all of the limitations of the above claims except for the corrosive substance being hydrogen sulfide and except for a temperature sensor to take temperature readings of the wellbore fluid.

In column 1, lines 10-40, Carrier et al. teaches that hydrogen sulfide is a common corrosive agent in wellbores. It would have been considered obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art, at the time the invention was made, to have used the method of Abercrombie to detect hydrogen sulfide, a common wellbore corrosive substance as taught Carrier et al., in order to have been able to detect the presence of poisonous and corrosive hydrogen sulfide through the use a relatively uncomplicated detection process.

Waterman et al. teaches a method and tool for monitoring corrosion in a wellbore. It would have been considered obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art, at the time the invention was made, to have included a temperature sensor as taught by Waterman et al. in the system of Abercrombie in view of Carrier et al. in order to have been able to correlate the amount of corrosion to the temperature of the well since corrosion is dependent on the temperature of the fluid (see col. 1, ll 23-27).

13. Claims 32-34 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Abercrombie (US 4,605,065) in view of Williams (US 4,688,638) and Waterman et al. (US 5,627,749).

*Regarding claim 32:* Abercrombie discloses an apparatus for monitoring corrosion in a well that includes the following features:

- A housing (11) for holding a coupon that is responsive to a corrosive substance in wellbore fluid.
- At least one sample (59).
- At least one passage (27) for conducting formation fluid to the at least one sample.

- A hydraulic assembly for delivering the fluid to the at least one sample. *It should be noted that a hydraulic assembly such as a pump would have to be used to circulate fluid within the well.*
- While not specifically disclosed that the at least one sample changes color in response to the presence of hydrogen sulfide, the examiner notes that Abercrombie does inspect the at least one sample for changes due to corrosion and it is the examiner's opinion that color change is the most common visual way of determining if a material has corroded. Therefore, the examiner believes that Abercrombie teaches this feature.

Abercrombie discloses all of the limitations of the above claims except for the corrosive substance being hydrogen sulfide, except for using a plurality of coupons, and except for a temperature sensor to take temperature readings of the wellbore fluid.

As noted in column 1, line 67-column 2, line 12, Williams teach a downhole corrosion coupon holder. The holder can hold two or more coupons that are responsive to hydrogen sulfide and the coupons may be of different material. It would have been considered obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art, at the time the invention was made, to have included several coupons in the system of Abercrombie where the coupons are reactive to hydrogen sulfide as taught by Williams in order to have been able to determine how different alloys were affected by the same environment.

Waterman et al. teaches a method and tool for monitoring corrosion in a wellbore where the tool includes a temperature sensor. It would have been considered obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art, at the time the invention was made, to have included a temperature sensor as taught by Waterman et al. in the system of Abercrombie in view of Williams in order to have been able to correlate the amount of corrosion to the temperature of the well since corrosion is dependent on the temperature of the fluid (see col. 1, ll 23-27).

*Regarding claim 33 and 34:* Abercrombie and Williams discloses all of the limitations of the above claims except for a sensor that is capable of detecting the visual change in the at least one sample where the sensor can transmit a signal that indicates the change. Waterman et al. teaches a sensor that monitors the corrosion of a coupon and a CPU stores and transmits the data

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from the sensor. It would have been considered obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art, at the time the invention was made, to have included the sensor and CPU of Waterman et al. in the system of Abercrombie in view of Williams in order to have provided a means for monitoring the change in hydrogen sulfide amounts over a given time without having to remove the tool (see col. 1, ll 30-50).

### **Conclusion**


14. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.


The remaining references made of record disclose various coupon holders and methods for detecting corrosion in a wellbore, i.e. detecting the amount of hydrogen sulfide in a wellbore.

15. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Jennifer H Gay whose telephone number is (703) 308-2881. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Thursday, 6:30-4:00 and Friday, 6:30-1:00.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, David Bagnell can be reached on (703) 308-2151. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are (703) 305-7687 for regular communications and (703) 305-7687 for After Final communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-1113.

  
David Bagnell  
Supervisory Patent Examiner  
Art Unit 3672

JHG   
April 8, 2003